

## Message Text

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ACTION ARA-06

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 CIAE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 8650

INFO AMEMBASSY PANAMA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 5857

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MX, PN, MQ

SUBJECT: ECHEVERRIA REQUESTS BRIEFING ON PANAMA

1. ECHEVERRIA SENT AN EMISSARY (GUTIERREZ) TO SAY THAT HE WAS MEETING PRESIDENT TORRIJOS OF PANAMA IN SOUTHERN MEXICO ON JULY 4 (THIS HAS ALREADY BEEN MADE PUBLIC), WHILE THEY WILL DISCUSS VARIOUS THINGS AND HE WILL SHOW HIM HYDRO-ELECTRIC COMPLEX IN CHIAPAS (AND PRESUMABLY THEY WILL DISCUSS THE PROPOSED TRANS-ISTHMUS OF TEHUANTEPEC CONTAINERIZED RAILWAY WHICH IN A WAY WOULD AFFECT THE PANAMA CANAL), HE THOUGHT THAT PRINCIPAL MATTER WOULD BE A REQUEST FOR MEXICAN SUPPORT ON PANAMA CANAL NEGOTIATIONS. FOR THIS REASON ECHEVERRIA FELT IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO HAVE A BRIEFING FROM U.S., GIVING U.S. POINT OF VIEW, STATUS OF NEGOTIATIONS AND MANNER IN WHICH HE COULD BEST BE HELPFUL. FOR INSTANCE, HE WOULD PROBABLY STRESS THE NEED TO AVOID CONFRONTATION AS THIS WOULD INVOLVE ALL OF LATIN AMERICA, WHICH WOULD FEEL OBLIGED TO SUPPORT PANAMA MORALLY, BUT AT THE SAME TIME WOULD BE MORE STERILE THAN NEGOTIATIONS. SHOULD DEPARTMENT FEEL ABLE TO SEND SOME EXPERT EMISSARY TO EXPLAIN CANAL NEGOTIATIONS HE WOULD BE VERY HAPPY TO RECEIVE HIM BUT OF COURSE THIS WOULD HAVE TO BE WITHIN THE

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NEXT TWO DAYS.

1. I TOLD GUTIERREZ IN GENERAL TERMS OF STATUS OF PANAMA CANAL MATTER AS I KNEW IT, POINT OUT THAT AS RECENTLY AS MAY 10 A JOINT COMMUNIQUE HAD BEEN ISSUED POINTING OUT FAVORABLE ASPECTS OF NEGOTIATIONS. I TOLD HIM THAT PANAMANIAN DELEGATION TO WCIWY HAD TOLD ME THAT WHILE THEY WERE OBLIGED TO MAKE STRONG SPEECH, PARTLY IN REACTION TO SNYDER AMENDMENT, THIS WAS FOR DOMESTIC CONSUMPTION WHILE THEY WISHED AT HIGHER LEVEL TO CONTINUE THE NEGOTIATIONS CONSTRUCTIVELY.

3. I PROMISED GUTIERREZ TO TELEPHONE WASHINGTON AT ONCE WITH THIS REQUEST (AND HAVE SINCE TALKED TO ASST. SECRETARY ROGERS) AND WOULD HOPE TO HAVE MATERIAL FOR HIM AND PERHAPS EVEN PRODUCE AN EMISSARY PRIOR TO HIS DEPARTURE TO TUXTLA GUTIERREZ FOR TORRIJOS MEETING.

4. IN MEANTIME, AN APPOINTMENT HAS BEEN SET UP FOR ME TO TAKE SENATOR MANSFIELD TO CALL ON ECHEVERRIA TOMORROW, WEDNESDAY, JULY 2, AT 11 AM. HENCE IT IS URGENT THAT ANY POINTS DEPARTMENT WISHES ME TO MAKE AT THAT TIME BE IN OUR HANDS BY OPENING OF BUSINESS TOMORROW MORNING. SHOULD THE DEPARTMENT FIND IT POSSIBLE TO SEND EMISSARY, SUCH AS MOREY BELL, THIS WOULD BE VERY WELCOME AND I COULD ALWAYS TAKE SUCH AN EMISSARY TO SEE ECHEVERRIA AGAIN ON THURSDAY.

5. SINCE DICTATING ABOVE HAVE RECEIVED PANAMA'S 3896; IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT MEXICANS GIVING IMPRESSION THAT MEETING IS AT TORRIJOS REQUEST. AT LUNCH FOR JAMAICAN PRIME MINISTER MANLEY A FEW MOMENTS AGO, ECHEVERRIA SOUGHT ME OUT AND MADE POINT OF SAYING THAT PANAMANIAN WERE MAKING A BIG THING OF MEETING, TORRIJOS BRINGING SOME FIVE CABINET MINISTERS WITH HIM AND HENCE HE WOULD BRING AN EQUIVALENT NUMBER. HE SAID HE LOOKED FORWARD TO DISCUSSING PANAMANIAN MATTER WITH ME AND TO CHATTING WITH SENATOR MANSFIELD ON THIS AND OTHER MATTERS TOMORROW AT 11:00. (I HAD PREVIOUSLY MADE CLEAR THAT WHILE SENATOR MANSFIELD COULD GIVE USEFUL INSIGHTS, HE SHOULD IN NO CASE BE CONSIDERED A SPOKESMAN FOR USG.)  
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6. WE SHOULD ALSO BE REALISTIC AND KEEP IN MIND THAT WHENEVER ECHEVERRIA IS GOING TO PULL A FAST ONE ON US HE USUALLY ACCOMPANIES SUCH MANEUVER WITH SIMULTANEOUS SEMI-PERSONAL AND FRIENDLY APPROACH TO US HERE OR IN WASHINGTON. HENCE THIS DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR WHATEVER COMMUNIQUE IS PRODUCED IN TUXTLA GUTIERREZ. I ALSO MADE A POINT OF TELLING THE PRESIDENT'S EMISSARY THAT MEXICO ALREADY

SEEMED TO BE SUPPORTING PANAMA FULLY AS WITNESSED TO  
SUPPORT FOR PANAMANIAN RESOLUTION ON CANAL AT WCIWY.  
JOVA

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## Message Attributes

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